

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 407 208

RC 021 054

AUTHOR McBeth, Sally J.
TITLE Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8191-2895-3
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 184p.
AVAILABLE FROM Out of print; available only via interlibrary loan.
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Historical Materials (060) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Acculturation; *American Indian Education; American Indian History; *American Indians; *Boarding Schools; Cultural Interrelationships; Educational Anthropology; Educational History; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnicity; Identification (Psychology); Intergroup Relations; *School Attitudes; *Student Experience; Tribes
IDENTIFIERS Ethnohistory; *Oklahoma; Pan Indianism

ABSTRACT

This book reports on a study of the perceptions of Oklahoma American Indians about their childhood experiences in government and church-sponsored boarding schools. Drawing on symbolic anthropology, the boarding school experience is interpreted to be a complex cultural symbol and symbolic process that contributes to group collectivity and belonging and expresses a dynamic ethnic identity. Data sources included in-depth interviews in Kiowa, Comanche, and Caddo Counties (Oklahoma), including taped interviews in the Doris Duke Indian Oral History Collection at the University of Oklahoma. Most informants were members of the Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa Apache, Fort Sill Apache, Wichita, Caddo, and Delaware tribes and attended boarding schools during 1920-60. The first four chapters cover elements of the investigation; geographic area and social networks defined (tribes, historical alliances, ethnicity); cultural and ethnohistorical background of Southern Plains Indians; and historical background of Indian Territory and Oklahoma, 1800-1982. Chapter 5 provides a brief history of Indian education and uses interview excerpts to describe life at the boarding schools (living conditions, academics, work duty, teachers, older students, segregation of the sexes, religion, military regimen, discipline). Chapter 6 interprets the boarding school experience in terms of dichotomous themes: separation/unification (camaraderie, intertribal affiliations, Indian-White relationships, pan-Indian identity); resistance/acceptance; and federal government control versus government obligations to Indian peoples. The final chapters summarize the functions of the boarding school on historical, symbolic, individual, and group levels. An appendix describes the Doris Duke Oral History Collection. Contains 167 references and photographs. (SV)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
